

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01

AID-20 NSCE-00 CU-05 EUR-25 DRC-01 /142 W

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R 060410Z SEP 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2098

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

DIA WASHDC

COMIPAC

COMUSTDC

DEPT ARMY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 9880

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

DEPT ARMY FOR ACSI//DAMI-F11

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJ: CRITICISM OF LIN PIAO'S MILITARY LINE

REF: PEKING 1518

SUMMARY. CURRENT CRITICISM OF LIN PIAO'S MILITARY REPUTATION
AND LINE COULD BE A DIVERSION OR NARROWING OF THE STRUGGLE TO
MILITARY SUBJECTS. IT MAY BE CALCULATED TO BRING SOME RECALCIT-
RANTS INTO LINE AS MUCH AS TO PREPARE FOR A PURGING OF
PRO-LIN ELEMENTS IN THE MILITARY. END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE BEEN PUZZLING OVER THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN, KICKED OFF
IN THE AUGUST ISSUE OF RED FLAG, TO DISCREDIT LIN PIAO'S MILITARY
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REPUTATION AND LINE AND THE INFORMATION AND SPECULATION IN REFTTEL

ADDS TO THE PICTURE. FOLLOWING ARE COMMENTS WE WOULD ADD AND THE TIDBITS OF INFORMATION WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GATHER.

2. IN LIGHT OF THE CENTER'S CURRENT CONCERN ABOUT PRODUCTION AND ACTION TAKEN TO CONSTRICT THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT, KICKING LIN'S MILITARY REPUTATION COULD BE A RELATIVELY SAFE DIVERSION OR NARROWING OF THE STRUGGLE OF MILITARY SUBJECTS. THE NCA SEPTEMBER 4 RED FLAG EXCERPTS CRITICIZING LIN'S MILITARY LINE HAVE A HEAVY EMPHASIS ON STUDY AND ARE RELATIVELY MILD IN TONE. UNLIKE A MILITANT SEPTEMBER 2 BROADCAST FROM KIRIN, THE NCNA ITEM AVOIDS LANGUAGE SUCH AS "WHIPPING UP" THE MASSES TO NEW LEVELS OF AGITATION, WHICH COULD INTERFERE WITH EFFORTS TO GET PRODUCTION BACK ON TRACK.

3. DLO HAS RECENTLY HEARD FROM ONE SOURCE THAT PLA CADRES OF DIVISION LEVEL AND ABOVE WHO HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH LIN BEGAN TO COME UNDER ATTACK IN JUNE. THIS WOULD LEND SUPPORT TO THE SPECULATION THAT THE MOUNTING ATTACKS BEGINNING IN AUGUST ON LIN'S MILITARY LINE ARE LINKED WITH PURGES IN THE PLA (IR 6842035574). ANOTHER DLO SOURCE STATES THAT THE MILITARY ATTACHE COMMUNITY IN PEKING FEELS THE CURRENT ATTACKS ON LIN ARE RELATED TO LONG-STANDING PRESSURES FROM HIS FORMER SUPPORTERS (HAN HSIEN-CHU IN PARTICULAR) FOR ACQUISITION OF MORE CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS (IR 6842033774).

4. THIS REMORSELESS KICKING AND BLACKENING OF THE FALLEN HERO IS PROBABLY CALCULATED TO BRING SOME RECALCITRANTS INTO LINE AS MUCH AS TO PREPARE FOR A PURGING. WE AGREE, HOWEVER, WITH USLO THAT IN ATTEMPTING TO "REVERSE THE REVERSAL OF HISTORY" ON LIN'S MILITARYLINE, THE LEADERSHIP IS GETTING INTO VERY MURKY WATERS. IF MAO KNEW LIN WAS SUCH A DUMMY AND COWARD, WHY DID MAO PROCEED TO APPOINT HIM AS SUCCESSOR IN 1969? A DLO LEFTIST SOURCE'S REPLY TO THIS QUESTION--THAT MAO WAS WILLING TO GIVE LIN THE OPPORTUNITY TO REDEEM HIMSELF--SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THOSE ON BOARD WITH THE CURRENT LINE HAVE NOT FIGURED OUT A GOOD ANSWER TO THAT. (THE OBVIOUS ANSWER, OF COURSE, IS THAT MAO NEEDED LIN'S SUPPORT IN 1969.)
CROSS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL STABILITY, POLITICAL SITUATION, MILITARY POLICIES, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974HONGK09880
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740247-0689
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740969/aaaacgqd.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: PEKING 1518
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25-Jul-2001 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <04 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CRITICISM OF LIN PIAO'S MILITARY LINE
TAGS: PINT, CH, (LIN PIAO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005